

Statement of Justification

Melrose Castle Special Event Exception Application

Melrose Castle, located at 8871 Rogues Road, Warrenton, Fauquier Co, VA, has the facilities, size, location, architectural uniqueness and historic significance to make it an ideal property for use as an elegant and gracious Special Events Site. The Castle has over 9,000 Sq Ft of usable space, has large first floor rooms that can accommodate guests in a seated environment with adequate room for dancing and indoor music set up. Melrose is truly a Castle, with enchanting classic castle walls, a large Turret, spacious rooms with high ceilings, two very large parlors, a roomy dinning room, a library, a huge kitchen area, fireplaces in virtually every room, grounds filled with 200 year old trees, a six stall stable, nearly 50 acres with the majority preserved in forest land with Turkey Run passing through it, and a perfect view of the Fauquier County countryside. This historic structure was completed just prior to the Civil War and served as an encampment for forces from both sides with the Castle serving as a headquarters building and hospital.

The Castle is entered through the base of the Turret and opens into a Great Hall, featuring an elegant staircase and elaborate moldings. Great Hall can be used to accommodate seated guests or serve as a dancing area. The two parlors can seat approximately 40 people in each and will reflect two predominate Fauquier County themes. They will be decorated as a "Hunt Room" and as room dedicated to the Civil War period (called the Murray Room as two Murray brothers fought for the Union and two brothers, including the builder, served in the Confederate Army). There are three bathrooms located on the first floor. There is also a fully screened in porch that surrounds the back of the Castle that can be used for seated guests.

Our goal is to offer our customers an elegant, gracious place to entertain inside a historic site. Many of the historic Special Events Sites in Northern Virginia do not allow guests to eat inside, or use the historic buildings. Pictures and tours are offered inside but the event is generally held under a tent. Melrose Castle will be the exception as events will be exclusively indoors and no tents will be used. This virtually eliminates the impact of events on neighbors and the surrounding community.

Area Served:

Fauquier and surrounding Counties, and the Richmond, VA and Washington, DC metropolitan areas

Type of Operation and Parameters:

- **Purpose of the Event Site:** ~~provide an elegant setting for weddings, birthdays, corporate events and retreats, family gatherings, and celebrations, family reunions, wedding and baby showers, and rehearsal dinners.~~
- All events/meals will be catered.
- Total Guests/Clients will not exceed 150 (normally in the 80-100 Range).
- All events will be indoors within Melrose Castle and the surrounding enclosed porch with the exception of photography.
- No Tents will be allowed or used.
- No outdoor amplified music will be allowed – all music will be indoors.
- All music will cease NLT 10:00 PM.
- ~~Events will primarily be on weekends, notably on Saturday.~~
- Events will occur primarily between the hours of 3:00 PM and 11:00 PM
- Major events will primarily occur between April and October of each year.
- We are planning for 2-4 events per month.
- Guests, during events, will be restricted to the Melrose Castle property.
- Alcoholic beverages consumed during events will be controlled and distributed by a licensed caterer.
- Number of employees: Two – Mr. and Mrs. North. Caterers provide all other labor.

Occupancy Factors:

- All events will be indoors.
- ~~Maximum number of event guests will be 150.~~
- Events will be scheduled throughout the year but will be primarily occur between April and October.
- Events will primarily occur on weekends
- ~~It is estimated that there will be 2-4 events per month.~~
- The vast majority of events will occur during a one day – 6-8 hour – period.
- Estimated number of annual events is between 40 and 60.

Entertainment:

- All event entertainment will be indoors to reduce noise impact on neighbors
- No amplified music or sound will be permitted outdoors.

Lighting: No additional lighting will be used for events beyond existing Melrose Castle lighting.

Qualification of Applicants: The future owners have extensive experience in the key components of this endeavor Mrs. North has over 15 years experience in operating both Senior Living and Assisted Living Facilities. She has supervised food service operations, resident care, furnishing and maintenance of the facilities, planned and maintained the budget, and oversaw daily operations for over 100 residents and staff. Mr. North has 15 years of successful marketing and sales expertise in the Healthcare Services Market.

Internal Improvements:

- Upgrading of the existing bathroom and kitchen facilities
- Repair and/or replacement of furnace and heat pumps/air conditioners
- Upgrading of water heater(s) to accommodate guests
- Restoration of public rooms to approximate the historical period when the property was built including the use of applicable art and artifacts that reflect the historic nature of the property and its builders.

External Improvements:

- Widen entrance and driveway to between 24-30 feet (as directed by VDOT) to allow simultaneous entry and exit from Melrose Castle. (See photos.)
- Create turn-in/turn-out areas extending 25-50 feet left and right of the driveway to allow easier access to and from Rogues Road (as directed by VDOT). (See photos.)
- Pave entrance and turn-in/turn-out areas with 8 inches of crushed rock (21A Stone) covered with 2 inches of Asphalt/Macadam and merge with Rogues Road.
- Pave driveway with 8 inches of crushed rock (21A Stone) covered with 2 inches of Asphalt/Macadam from entrance toward house for a distance of approximately 50-75 feet to ensure adequate two-way traffic passage.
- Existing main driveway runs from Rogues Road toward house for approximately 300 Feet and separates into a circular driveway in front of Castle with an additional driveway branching off to the Stables (see photos and diagram). Existing driveways are approximately 15 feet wide and have a crushed rock surface (somewhat over grown). Existing driveways also have multiple wider spots - some up to 30+ feet wide - that allow for parking of guest vehicles and passage. We will re-grade/scrape and/or remove weeds from existing driveways (see diagram and photos) and refresh crushed rock as needed. Entire driveway will NOT be paved as this would adversely affect the esthetic and historic presence of the property.
- Circular drive to Castle will be one way and one way signs will be posted.
- Entryway fence will be repaired or replaced with fence of design compatible with existing fences in neighborhood and will be painted white.
- A white sign post, approximately 12 feet high, with an approximately 3 feet X 3 feet sign announcing "Melrose Castle" and citing its status as being listed in the "National Register of Historic Places" (#83003281), and as a "Virginia Historic Landmark" (#030-0070), will be located on the left side of the entrance in a manner to not obstruct visibility of exiting guests or traffic on Rogues Road.
- No external modifications to the building will be made that would adversely affect the esthetic or historic nature of the property. Fences within and on the boundaries of the property will be repaired/replaced with fence of design compatible with existing fences in neighborhood and will be painted white.
- Landscaping will be enhanced with the addition of flower gardens, annual and perennial plantings, and bushes that add to the beauty of the property.

Water Supply:

- Water is supplied from a 149 feet deep well located 139 feet from the East side of the Castle. (See attached photos, topographic map, diagram and report.)
- Joiner Micro Laboratories conducted testing on 9/17/03 and found that the water is free of bacteria. (See attached report.)
- We have met with John Largent, VA Department of Health, Fauquier County to determine DOH requirements and obtained preliminary guidance from him. We will, of course, follow the recommendations of the DOH.
- Should certification of the well, as a "public well," be required we will comply with this requirement and any other requirements established by the VA DOH.

Septic System:

- The septic holding tank is located 58 feet from the West side of the Castle (322 feet from well) with the septic field extending further to the West down a gradual slope away from the Castle. (See attached photos, topographic map, diagram and report.)
- The Septic System was visually inspected on 9/17/03 and found to be an "Orangeburg System" functioning properly for 10-12 people. (See attached report.)
- The current septic system will not support major events. To accommodate event guests we will contract with "Bobby's Portable Restrooms" (see attached brochure) which provides temporary, but elegant, restroom facilities for events. Future plans include expanding the septic system to accommodate a guest load of up to 150.
- We have met with John Largent, VA Department of Health, Fauquier County to determine DOH requirements and obtained preliminary guidance from him. We will, of course, follow the recommendations of the VA DOH.

Kitchen:

- All Event meals will be fully catered. Kitchen improvements planned include replacement of existing appliances.

Parking:

- Parking for Melrose Castle event guests should not exceed 100 privately owned vehicles per event per day plus two owner vehicles. Vehicles will NOT be commercial vehicles with the exception of the caterer van.
- Parking for Melrose Castle event guests will be on the wide areas of the existing circular driveway, on the driveway to the stables, and on the two large grass areas to the East of the Castle (See attached diagram and photos). Handicapped parking will be available on the driveway close to the Castle and on the existing 16 feet X 22 feet cement hardstand. (See attached diagrams and photos.)
- No parked vehicles will be observable from Rogues Road due to the slope of the land and existing vegetation. No changes in vegetation growth other than normal maintenance and removal of dead materials and the addition of esthetically correct landscaping with plants, flowers, etc will be done.

- Parking will be on mowed grass surfaces and existing driveways. Grass will be mowed to a height of 2-3 inches prior to each event to preclude any possibility of fire caused by muffler or catalytic converter contact with grass.
- Event parking areas will NOT be paved. Application for "dustless parking area waiver" will be submitted, if requested.
- Primary parking area is approximately 244 feet from nearest property line (see attached diagram and photos).
- Overflow parking area is approximately 100 feet from nearest property line (see attached diagram and photos).

Water Flow, Drainage and Landscape:

- Property, entryway, driveways, and the basic structures have been in existence for over 150 years with no appreciable erosion noticeable.
- No modifications that would affect drainage – other than entryway improvements – are planned.
- Property is situated on a hill in excess of 75 feet above the flood plane. (See County GIS Flood Plane Map and County GIS Topographic Maps)
- Addition of macadam entryway and partial macadam driveway will add 3250 sq ft of hard surface and should cause no appreciable increase in run off.
- Soil types are shown in the attached County GIS Soil Survey Map.
- Landscape consists of approximately 47 acres of heavily wooded terrain and approximately 3 acres of improved area consisting of buildings and landscaped areas with 200+ year old trees, grass, bushes, hedges, and gardens.

Traffic Impact:

- Primary routing of all guest Traffic will be from Rt 643 to Rt 616 to Rogues Rd (RT 602).
- Melrose Castle event vehicular traffic should have minimal impact on Rogues Road and connecting highway traffic.
- The anticipated maximum of 100 event guest vehicles will normally arrive over a 1-2 hour period preceding the event, usually between 1:00 and 3:00 PM, on a Saturday and will normally depart between 10:00 and 11:30 PM that night.
- Scheduled improvements for the entrance to Melrose Castle will allow unimpeded simultaneous entrance and exit from the property.
- The current exit allows driver unimpeded visibility for approximately 250-300 feet both ways on Rogues Road so that guests may make a safe exit from the property. Scheduled improvements will have no adverse impact on this visibility.
- We have had an initial meeting with Mr. Michael Gardner, VDOT, to determine VDOT requirements and obtained preliminary guidance from him. We will, of course, follow the recommendations of VDOT.
- See discussion of External Improvements above for detailed description of improvements for improved traffic flow and to comply with VDOT requirements.